

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1-9. (Cancelled).

10. (Currently Amended) A speech signal decoding apparatus comprising:  
a plurality of decoding means for decoding information containing at least a sound source signal, a gain, and filter coefficients from a received bit stream;

identification means for identifying voiced speech and unvoiced speech of a speech signal using the decoded information, at least the unvoiced speech containing a background noise;

classification means for classifying unvoiced speech in accordance with the decoded information;

smoothing means for performing smoothing processing in accordance with a classification result of said classification means for at least one of the decoded gain and the decoded filter coefficients in the unvoiced speech identified by said identification means;

means for obtaining an excitation signal by multiplying the decoded sound source signal by the decoded gain after performing the smoothing processing; and

means for decoding the speech signal by driving a filter having the decoded filter coefficients by the excitation signal obtained from the means for obtaining.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein said identification means performs identification operation using a value obtained by averaging for a long term a variation amount based on a difference between the decoded filter coefficients and their long-term average.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein said classification means performs classification operation using a value obtained by averaging for a long term a variation amount based on a difference between the decoded filter coefficients and their long-term average.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein said decoding means decodes information containing pitch periodicity and a power of the speech signal from the received bit stream, and

    said identification means performs identification operation using at least either one of the decoded pitch periodicity and the decoded power output from said decoding means.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein said decoding means decodes information containing pitch periodicity and a power of the speech signal from the received bit stream, and

    said classification means performs classification operation using at least either one of the decoded pitch periodicity and the decoded power output from said decoding means.

16. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein said apparatus further comprises estimation means for estimating pitch periodicity and a power of the speech signal from the excitation signal and the decoded speech signal, and

    said identification means performs identification operation using at least either one of the estimated pitch periodicity and the estimated power output from said estimation means.

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein said apparatus further comprises estimation means for estimating pitch periodicity and a power of the speech signal from the excitation signal and the decoded speech signal, and

    said classification means performs classification operation using at least either one of the estimated pitch periodicity and the estimated power output from said estimation means.

18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein said classification means classifies unvoiced speech by comparing a value obtained by the decoded filter coefficients from said decoding means with a predetermined threshold.

19. (Canceled).

20. (Previously Presented) A speech signal decoding/encoding apparatus comprising:

speech signal encoding means for encoding a speech signal by expressing the speech signal by at least a sound source signal, a gain, and filter coefficients;

a plurality of decoding means for decoding information containing a sound source signal, a gain, and filter coefficients from a received bit stream output from said speech signal encoding means;

identification means for identifying voiced speech and unvoiced speech of the speech signal using the decoded information, at least the unvoiced speech containing a background noise;

classification means for classifying unvoiced speech in accordance with the decoded information;

smoothing means for performing smoothing processing in accordance with a classification result of said classification means for at least one of the decoded gain and the decoded filter coefficients in the unvoiced speech identified by said identification means.

means for obtaining an excitation signal by multiplying the decoded sound source signal by the decoded gain after performing the smoothing processing; and

means for decoding the speech signal by driving a filter having the decoded filter coefficients by the excitation signal obtained from the means for obtaining.

21. (Previously Presented) A speech signal decoding method comprising the steps of:

decoding information containing at least a sound source signal, a gain, and filter coefficients from a received bit stream;

identifying voiced speech and unvoiced speech of a speech signal using the decoded information, at least the unvoiced speech containing a background noise;

classifying unvoiced speech in accordance with the decoded information;

performing smoothing processing based on the classified speech for at least either one of the decoded gain and the decoded filter coefficients, said smoothing operation performed in the identified speech in order to provide enhanced coding quality for at least the unvoiced speech with the background noise; and

decoding the speech signal by driving a filter having the decoded filter coefficients by an excitation signal obtained by multiplying the decoded sound source signal by the decoded gain using a result of the smoothing processing.

22. (Cancel).

23. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 21, wherein the identifying step comprises the step of performing identification operation using a value obtained by averaging for a long term a variation amount based on a difference between the decoded filter coefficients and their long-term average.

24. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 21, wherein the classifying step comprises the step of performing classification operation using a value obtained by averaging for a long term a variation amount based on a difference between the decoded filter coefficients and their long-term average.

25. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 21, wherein the decoding step comprises the step of decoding information containing pitch periodicity and a power of the speech signal from the received bit stream, and the identifying step comprises the step of performing identification operation using at least either one of the decoded pitch periodicity and the decoded power.

26. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 21, wherein the decoding step comprises the step of decoding information containing pitch periodicity and a power of the speech signal from the received bit stream, and the classifying step comprises the step of performing classification operation using at least either one of the decoded pitch periodicity and the decoded power.

27. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 21, wherein the method further comprises the step of estimating pitch periodicity and a power of the speech signal from the excitation signal and the decoded speech signal, and the identifying step comprises the step of performing identification operation using at least either one of the estimated pitch periodicity information and the estimated power.

28. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 21, wherein the method further comprises the step of estimating pitch periodicity and a power of the speech signal from the excitation signal and the decoded speech signal, and the classifying step comprises the step of performing classification operation using at least either one of the estimated pitch periodicity and the estimated power.

29. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 21, wherein the classifying step comprises the step of classifying unvoiced speech by comparing a value obtained by the decoded filter coefficients with a predetermined threshold.

30. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 10 wherein said plurality of decoding means includes means for decoding a power of said speech signal and said identification means identifies voiced speech and unvoiced speech of the speech signal using the decoded information and the power of the speech signal.

31. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 20 wherein said plurality of decoding means includes means for decoding a power of said speech signal and said identification means identifies voiced speech and unvoiced speech of the speech signal using the decoded information and the power of the speech signal.

32. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 21 wherein said decoding step further decodes a power of said speech signal and said identifying step identifies the voiced speech and unvoiced speech of the speech signal using the decoded information and the power of the speech signal.

33. (Previously Presented) A speech signal decoding apparatus comprising:  
a plurality of decoding devices for decoding information containing at least a sound source signal, a gain, and filter coefficients from a received bit stream;  
an identification device for identifying voiced speech and unvoiced speech of a speech signal using the decoded information, at least the unvoiced speech containing a background noise;  
classification device for classifying unvoiced speech in accordance with the decoded information;

smoothing device for performing smoothing processing in accordance with a classification result of said classification device for at least one of the decoded gain and the decoded filter coefficients in the unvoiced speech identified by said identification device in order to provide enhanced decoding quality for at least the unvoiced speech with the background noise;

a multiplier device for generating an excitation signal by multiplying the decoded sound source signal by the decided gain after performing the smoothing processing; and

a decoder for decoding the speech signal by driving a filter having the decoded filter coefficients by the excitation signal.

34.- 35. (Canceled)

36. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 33, wherein said classification device performs a classification operation using a value obtained by averaging for a long term a variation amount based on a difference between the decoded filter coefficients and their long-term average.

37. (Canceled).

38. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 33, wherein said decoding device decodes information containing pitch periodicity and a power of the speech signal from the received bit stream, and  
said classification device performs a classification operation using at least either one of the decoded pitch periodicity and the decoded power output from said decoding device.

39. (Canceled).

40. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 33, wherein said apparatus further comprises an estimation device for estimating pitch periodicity and a power of the speech signal from the excitation signal and the decoded speech signal, and

    said classification device performs a classification operation using at least either one of the estimated pitch periodicity and the estimated power output from said estimation device.

41. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 33, wherein said classification device classifies unvoiced speech by comparing a value obtained by the decoded filter coefficients from said decoding device with a predetermined threshold.

42. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 33 wherein said plurality of decoding devices includes a decoding device for decoding a power of said speech signal and said identification device identifies voiced speech and unvoiced speech of the speech signal using the decoded information and the power of the speech signal.

43. (Previously Presented) A speech signal decoding/encoding apparatus comprising:

a speech signal encoding device for encoding a speech signal by expressing the speech signal by at least a sound source signal, a gain, and filter coefficients;

a plurality of decoding devices for decoding information containing a sound source signal, a gain, and filter coefficients from a received bit stream output from said speech signal encoding device;

an identification device for identifying voiced speech and unvoiced speech of the speech signal using the decoded information, at least the unvoiced speech containing a background noise;

a classification device for classifying unvoiced speech in accordance with the decoded information;

a smoothing device for performing smoothing processing based on a classification result of the classification device for at least either one of the decoded gain and the decoded filter coefficients in the speech identified by said identification device in order to provide enhanced coding quality for at least the unvoiced speech with the background noise;

a multiplier device for generating an excitation signal by multiplying the decoded sound source signal by the decoded gain after performing the smoothing processing; and

a decoder for decoding the speech signal by driving a filter having the decoded filter coefficients by the excitation signal.

44. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 43, wherein said plurality of decoding devices includes a decoding device for decoding a power of said speech

signal and said identification device identifies voiced speech and unvoiced speech of the speech signal using the decoded information and the power of the speech signal.